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~~(S)~~ While engaging SSA George L. Piro in casual conversation in his detention cell, Saddam Hussein provided the following information:

~~(S)~~ Hussein inquired on current events in Iraq. Hussein was advised of the accomplishments in Iraq, to include the signing of the new constitution, and the preparations for the turn over of sovereignty to the Iraqis. Hussein questioned the effectiveness of the Governing Council (GC), in his view the GC could agree among themselves to make decisions. Hussein was advised of the eventual elections in Iraq, in which the Iraqi people will have the opportunity to democratically elect a new leader. Hussein stated that the Iraqi people would not accept an elected leader during occupation and has experienced this in the past when King Faisal was brought to power under British power. SSA Piro described to Hussein the recent poll of Iraqis in which the Iraqi people want control over their government, but want United States forces to remain in Iraq.

~~(S)~~ While talking about the air conditioning in Hussein's cell, which was being repaired at that time, Hussein advised that he is used to living simply and personally does not like an extravagant lifestyle. Hussein was then questioned about the number of palaces and their extravagant nature. Hussein stated that the palaces belong to the nation and not to one person. Before 1968, the Iraqi homes were basically very primitive and made out of mud. As in western countries, historically architects developed their skill and designs by building castles. The palaces gave Iraqi architects the opportunity to develop their skills which could then be seen in the improvement of the design of the typical Iraqi home. Additionally, there was a threat from the United States and Israel, especially during the last ten years. For the government to function, the leadership had to meet and discuss issues prior to rendering decisions. If there were only two palaces or locations that the leadership could meet, it would have been very easy for the elimination of the Iraqi leadership. However, with twenty palaces, it was much more difficult to track or identify the location of the Iraqi leadership. Since these palaces belonged to the nation, Hussein did not live in them and

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preferred to live in a simple home. Hussein would eat what was prepared for his protection detail and did not have a lot of demands. Hussein believed the United States had a misconception that he had an extravagant lifestyle, which led to his ability to evade capture. Hussein believes his capture was solely caused by betrayal.

~~(S)~~ Hussein's work schedule was long, but he would set time aside for fictional reading, something he enjoyed very much. His days would include meetings with the other senior Ba'ath Party members. Hussein claimed he regularly met with the Iraqi people as he found them to be the best source of accurate information. Hussein would meet with citizens daily, or every other day. When asked, how could he be certain that the citizens were honest during their discussions, as most would have been afraid? Hussein replied that this could have been the case, but he had a extremely long relationship with the Iraqi people and the population knew he sought the truth. Hussein gave an example involving his half-brother, Watban Ibrahim Hasan Al-Majid, the Minister of Interior at the time. A citizen reported to Hussein that while stopped at a traffic light, Watban fired his pistol at the traffic light. Hussein contacted Watban to determine if this was true. Watban acknowledged it was. Hussein then told him to pack his things, allowing him to learn of his removal from Hussein instead of the state news radio. Hussein claimed that he held his family at a higher standard than others.

~~(S)~~ Hussein indicated he was interested in understanding the American culture, and did so by watching American movies. According to Hussein, he watched numerous American films, from these he developed his opinion of the American culture.

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